

Patent claims

1. An apparatus for converting thermal energy to another energy form (14; 6; 22)
- 5 - having at least one heat input and accumulator module (100), which in each case has:
- a device (1; 21) transmitting a heat input, and
  - an accumulator (2; 60, 61, 62),
- 10 said device (1; 21) and accumulator (2; 60, 61, 62) being connected to one another (30) for the exchange of fluid,
- having an energy conversion device (5, 6; 14, 17; 22), which is connected to the accumulator (2; 60, 61, 62) of the heat input and accumulator module (100) for
- 15 the exchange of fluid, by means of which energy conversion device the energy which can be built up as fluid pressure in the heat input and accumulator module (100) can be converted to said other energy form (14; 6; 22).
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2. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that a plurality of heat input and accumulator modules (100) are provided which are connected to a distribution unit (40), by means of which the
- 25 individual heat input and accumulator modules (100) can be connected intermittently to the energy conversion device (5, 6; 14, 17).
3. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1 or 2,
- 30 characterized in that the energy conversion device is a hydraulic motor (5; 22) and optionally also a generator (6), connected to said hydraulic motor, for current generation purposes.
- 35 4. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1 or 2, characterized in that the energy conversion device is a hydraulic lifting apparatus (17, 14) or a torque-storing apparatus.

5. The apparatus as claimed in one of claims 1 to 4, characterized in that a heat exchanger (35; 79) is connected to the energy conversion device, and in that  
5 the heat exchanger (35; 79) is connected to the device (1; 21) transmitting a heat input via a circulation pump (9; 80).

6. The apparatus as claimed in claim 5, characterized  
10 in that a defoaming and dehumidifying reservoir (19) is provided between the heat exchanger (35) and the circulation pump (9).

7. The apparatus as claimed in one of claims 1 to 6,  
15 characterized in that the device (1; 21) transmitting a heat input is a solar collector (1).

8. The apparatus as claimed in one of claims 1 to 6,  
20 characterized in that the device (1; 21) transmitting a heat input is an internal combustion engine (21).